

Sounding Board Meeting Summary - June 23, 2011

I. INTRODUCTION

This is the meeting summary of the June 23 Parking Sounding Board. These important meetings are being held as part of the Performance-Based Parking Pricing Study being conducted by the Seattle Department of Transportation. The meetings are intended to keep community stakeholders informed as the project process unfolds and to provide feedback as the development of performance-based parking pricing strategies evolves. This meeting introduced the Sounding Board to the Parking Expert Advisory Panel.

MINUTES	JUNE 23, 2011	SEATTLE MUNICIPAL TOWER RM. 4050/4060
ATTENDEES (Underlined Indicates "In Attendance")	<u>Katherine MacKinnon</u>	Downtown Seattle Association (DSA)
	Rod Kauffman	Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA)
	<u>Francine Fielding</u>	Wright-Runstad
	<u>Laura Larson</u>	Republic Parking
	<u>Ed Danyluk</u>	Imperial Parking Corporation (IMPARK)
	<u>Mike Fuda</u>	Diamond Parking Service
	<u>Josh McDonald</u>	WA Restaurant Association
	Pamela Hinckley	Tom Douglas Restaurants
	Leslie Smith	Alliance for Pioneer Square
	Tim Gaydos	Belltown Business Association, Mars Hill Church
	<u>Chip Wall</u>	Pike/Pine Urban Neighborhood Council
	Michael Wells	Capitol Hill Chamber of Commerce
	<u>Doug Campbell</u>	U District Business Owner, Bulldog News
	<u>Beth Miller</u>	Ballard Chamber of Commerce
	Don Blakeney	Chinatown/International District BIA
	<u>Jessica Vets</u>	Fremont Chamber of Commerce
	<u>Susan Ranf</u>	Seattle Mariners
	<u>Eric de Place</u>	Sightline Institute
	Rob Johnson	Transportation Choices Coalition
	Tom Norwalk	Seattle Convention and Visitors Bureau
<u>Erica Sekins</u>	Seattle Commission for People with disAbilities	
Dick Burkhart	City Neighborhood Council	
<u>Jerry Everard</u>	Seattle Nightlife and Music Association	

ATTENDEES (Underlined Indicates "In Attendance")	ADVISORY PANEL MEMBERS
	<u>Chad Lynn, Director Parking Services, City of Beverly Hills, CA</u>
	<u>David Feehan, President, Civitas Consultants, LLC</u>
	<u>Diane Cunningham, President, Cunningham Parking Consultants</u>

Todd Pierce, President, PICTOFORM

David Hill, Senior Planner, MMM Consultants

Casey Jones, CAPP, Dir. of Parking and Transportation Services, Boise State Univ.

CITY STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

- SDOT: Peter Hahn, Charles Bookman, Mike Estey, Cristina VanValkenburgh, Margo Polley, Mary Catherine Snyder, Allison Schwartz
- Mayor's Office: David Hiller

CONSULTANT TEAM IN ATTENDANCE:

- Kimley-Horn & Associates, Inc.: Dennis Burns, CAPP
- Kimley-Horn & Associates, Inc.: Brett Wood, P.E.

Meeting Notes:

This meeting was divided into two sessions: a question and answer session with the Expert Panel, followed by break-out groups for more intimate discussions. The groups were reassembled and the discussions summarized.

Expert Panel Question and Answer Session

Mary Catherine Snyder led introductions and gave a general overview of the project. Dennis Burns followed with an introduction of the parking expert advisory panel. The following is a list of the expert panel members along a brief note as to why they were chosen for this panel:

Chad Lynn, CAPP Director Parking Services, City of Beverly Hills, CA

- Mr. Lynn is a certified administrator of public parking (CAPP) and is well respected in the field of municipal parking management. Mr. Lynn is a member of an advisory board overseeing the new LA Express Park program in Los Angeles. The LA Express Park project is one of two major federally subsidized programs to pilot on-street technologies, including the implementation of performance-based parking pricing strategies.

David Feehan, President, Civitas Consultants, LLC

- Mr. Feehan is the former President of the International Downtown Association and has managed a host of downtown management associations (including the development of innovative and ground-breaking parking management programs). Mr. Feehan brings a special perspective on how effectively managed parking programs can create economic benefits to downtowns.

Diane Cunningham, President, Cunningham Parking Consultants

- Ms. Cunningham ran the City of Los Angeles' parking program for two decades and brings a world of municipal parking operations know-how specific to large cities. Since her retirement

from the City of Los Angeles, she has worked for parking technology firms and is very familiar with the latest innovation on the technology front.

Todd Pierce, President, PICTOFORM

- Mr. Pierce is one of the country’s leading designers of parking facility signage, but his expertise extends beyond signage. He is currently engaged with the *SFPark* program in San Francisco. *SFPark* is the other major federally subsidized program to pilot in on-street technologies, including the implementation of performance-based parking pricing strategies. He is designing and manufacturing the signage for the *SFPark* program as well as advising *SFPark* on matters relating to program branding and communications.

David Hill, CAPP Senior Planner, MMM Consultants

- Until recently, Mr. Hill was the COO of the Winnipeg Parking Authority. In five short years, Mr. Hill took a floundering parking program and transformed it into one of the best municipal parking programs in North America. He was named the “Parking Professional of the Year” by the International Parking Institute in 2010. Winnipeg is also looking at variable parking pricing and is a leader in leveraging mobile license plate recognition technology as a tool in this effort.

Casey Jones, CAPP, Director of Parking and Transportation Services, Boise State Univ.

- Mr. Jones is fast becoming transportation and parking industry leader in sustainable transportation policy development. He is currently the chair of the International Parking Institute (IP). His previous employment experience includes managing Portland, Oregon’s Smart Park program and directing Transportation and Parking Services for the University of Colorado.

Several panel members gave a brief overview of the *SFPark* and LA Express Park systems. *SFPark* is moving to a program of variable rates on the block face level and LA Express Park is considering truly dynamic pricing in real time. The following summarizes some of the Sounding Board questions and discussion.

- How do customers in these cities respond to changes?
 - Chad Lynn – There is not enough data yet. The federal government is providing funding to determine this answer. Occupancy is shifting, but it is not clear why.
 - Diane Cunningham – The roll-out of the package/technology was important. Marketing and public outreach in advance of changes was heavily emphasized.
 - Chad Lynn – There are measurable benefits to the citizens related to new technology (meters, pay-by-cell phone, etc.).
 - Dave Hill – Cultural and generational shift in technology usage is shifting to parking.
 - Chad Lynn – San Francisco expects success because its customer base is more technologically savvy.
- Use of personal smart phones makes it more accessible and convenient
- Every transit user in Seattle uses “one bus away.” That concept will work for parking.

- How have communities absorbed cost of roll-out, operations, capital, and maintenance?
 - Diane Cunningham – A number of opportunities such as revenue sharing, outsourcing, public-private partnerships, etc.
- The City has made management changes without infrastructure changes (for example, implementing a change in meter hours from “4pm -8pm” without changing out the “4pm -6pm” signs).
 - Mike Estey – The City has been working on these changes; we still have work to do.
 - Dave Hill – Technology associated with these changes is on a grand scale; we have to use the right tools to help communities make the “right parking decisions.”
- *SFPark* “Parker” app is a great communication tool
- What is “enough” parking for a city like Seattle?
 - Chad Lynn – At what level? There is never enough free parking. San Francisco sets parking capacity low to drive transportation decisions. In LA, every development requires parking, which creates an expansive system.
 - Todd Pierce - In Vancouver, 53% of circulating traffic is looking for parking
- How to define vehicles looking for parking?
 - Dennis Burns – Generally, there is enough parking, it’s just not as convenient as people want. Sensors and “heat-map” parking availability information are examples of tools that can provide information for making better parking and transportation decisions.
- In my area, there is never enough parking. Can off-street be integrated with the system to support needs?
 - Dennis Burns – Charlotte Parking Management Collaborative is an example of a program that was designed to coordinate and communicate off-street parking availability. Seattle’s e-Park has some similar elements such as the parking guidance signage and outreach program to private parking owners and managers. Creating a program that also integrates the promotion of transit and transportation alternative is important. The goal is a more integrated access management system.
- Have studies looked at promoting compact vehicle size to increase capacity?
- Have studies been done to determine how lost parking has impacted retail shopping cores?
 - Dave Hill – People make decisions based on destination rather than cost. Measure impact “with feet.” Are people still going there?
 - Dave Feehan - Parking is not about storing cars, it’s about people. Our parking management decisions need to be flexible and respond to new economic trends such as the “she-conomy”. People are creatures of habit and will still go if the destination draws them.
 - Chad Lynn – Parking supports destination, not the other way around. Suburban facilities have the luxury of “over-built” parking. In Beverly Hills, raising rates increased turnover and increased revenue but due to high demand did not create increased “availability”. This may be the case in certain areas of Seattle where the goal of using price to create

one-to-two spaces per block face may not be achievable due to the level of demand. However, in this scenario, achieving increased turnover is an acceptable outcome.

The larger group was split into two smaller groups for more intimate and engaged discussion. The following is a summary of each group's discussions.

“Yellow” Break-out Group Discussion

- How realistic are these options with the current climate?
 - There are interesting financing options. Pay stations are reaching critical life. New implementation will provide a “capital platform.”
 - New technology requires a changing, evolving implementation strategy
 - There are “high” and “low” cost technology solutions. Industry as a whole is evolving and prices are falling. Use of smart phones puts the “platform cost” in the user’s hands.
- In Seattle, I don’t need that much information
- Many people don’t have “the platform”?
 - In other countries, this type of rollout has worked. In America, we have to be cognizant of needs. Industry needs to evolve with evolving technology (movement to the Smartphone).
 - Technology is a means of achieving goals. Give people the goals and let them decide. (Seattle is at 82% credit card usage)
 - No downside to technology, as long as it works and is reliable. Transit not integrated. Need for “car storage.” Growth in businesses means there is a need to ensure areas have adequate parking.
 - Most progressive parking professionals don’t think about “building parking,” but rather “access management” (TDM, price, demand management)
- Other choices are not convenient. Cost does not impact my decision to drive. “Lost time” does.
 - Perfect example of price sensitivity. The decision to pay a certain price will rest with every driver, commuter, employee, etc.
 - All businesses want to be on Ballard Ave. (free parking) rather than Market St. where you have to pay to park.
 - It’s not really the parking, but rather the destination on Ballard Ave.
- Why not activate pedestrian space and build parking structures?
 - The City is opposed to building structures
 - The “TDM” concept is social engineering. New policies increase density without increasing transit or transportation options
 - The City uses parking minimums as a tool, but does not require parking
- Enforcement has a punitive aspect and affects people’s decision to come back.

- Many times demand studies show that the most popular spots are taken, but spaces are available within walking distance. This is the issue in Fremont.
- Explain the parking issues on Ballard. It's a historic area with minimal space. Businesses turnover and nightlife is a new issues that could be better managed through technology. The area needs better management, better education, and some tangible results from parking meter implementation.
- Do any communities do a "give back" (revenue sharing/return a portion of meter revenues to neighborhood)? Pasadena, Beverly Hills (sort-of). In Pasadena, suburban mall parking is paid by merchant in some way (masked and packaged). In a downtown setting, one or three people pay: 1) resident (taxes), 2) merchants (taxes), or 3) user (rates). If a merchant community wants free parking, who pays for it?

"Blue" Break-out Group Discussion

- What does the City want to do?
 - Dennis Burns described the study scope, enabling technologies, and how performance-based parking pricing applies to different areas.
 - Part of the struggle is variability where parking is paid and where it is free. How to get people over the hurdle of having to pay for parking.
 - When looking at "pure policy," note that Pioneer Square is affected by the Alaskan Way Viaduct project and other construction, plus government exempt fire/police station
 - Trying to determine a strategy that works for you and business districts
- Comment about the use of disabled parking permits and how it affects communication
- On game day events and other Safeco/Qwest events, paid parking in the evening makes sense. But it's a "ghost town" on non-game days.
- Issue of residential/business district mix without a Restricted Parking Zone downtown
- Lack of transit service especially at night to get home
- Discussion of pay by cell – why not? Who has an argument against it, as long as it's on top of other options
- People are concerned that credit card gets double charged
- Want to see highest quality of technology used
- Pay-by-cell – pay remotely – Brilliant
- Pay-by-cell as game changer with parking application
 - Include special disabled placard permit by cell or government vehicle for discount?
 - Pay-by-cell is very tested – Finland 70% of people pay by cell phone
 - Seattle is very tech savvy. See so many people walking down the street with a phone
 - Evening activities
 - Is the pay-by-cell option available for employees?

- Concern for late-night employees where bus is not an option
- Reserve additional time – extend time after dinner or before a show
- Want to see program that is financially sustainable with O-M covered
- Restaurants definitely have peak and off-peak times, so variable rates sounds ok with predictability/consistency as a key
- What’s the relationship between parking rates and the types of businesses on each street?
- How much variability is there?
 - A great deal by day, month, and weather (snow)
- Comment about how restaurant activity has changed. How price sensitive?
- Comment about public safety concern, especially from outer suburbs. People not willing to ride bus, especially at night.
- Destination restaurants where people seek out the Tom Douglas, etc. People do go out for lunch.
- All about getting the return customer. Keep in mind the “experience.” I had a good time, easy, want to come back.
- Parking as one component of the experience
- Think about parking as a unique neighborhood issue – different issue in different areas
- U-District – evening parking is helpful for keeping students out of spaces all night

Summary

The following are the main themes that resulted from the Sounding Board discussions.

- We need to compare ourselves to other cities with close-by competing cities (Tacoma, along with rising cost to commute)
- Interesting to monitor metrics (transit, demographics, sales tax, etc.). Also need to be cognizant of rising transportation costs
- Also need to be cognizant of how these costs affect businesses.
- Request for the sounding board to review the draft parking survey
- Does nearby free parking affect destination decision?